The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news concerning and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
A BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1738 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 24, NO. 31

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Suppose that Germany surrendered tomorrow. Suppose that Japan, realizing the hopelessness of resisting the combined might of the United Nations, were to give up the next day. What would happen?

The answer is that we would lose the peace.

Lord knows, everyone is hoping and praying that our enemies will collapse quickly and that the war will end in the shortest possible time. But the dangerous fact remains that we haven't prepared for such a contingency.

That is why the American Federation of Labor has opened a renewed drive now and is pushing with might and main for immediate passage of the Kilgore Bill. This measure is needed to set up the machinery for smoothly reconverting from war to peace and for utilizing the manpower for specific purposes. It is preferred to it for reasons other bills dealing with post-war readjustment because it seeks to protect human needs as well as property needs.

Of course, we don't really hope or have soon victory will come. The fighting may still be prolonged for another year or more. But there are increasing indications that the Nazis are on the point of collapse. Military leaders, fearful of over-optimism, decry such reports—but they hope and should they turn out to be true, our country will be asleep at the switch—unless Congress wakes up right now.

Consequences of Peace

Let's look for a moment at the possible consequences of sudden peace for which we have as yet made no adequate provision.

Overnight, at least ten million war workers would be thrown out of their jobs. Contracts would be cancelled almost automatically. Factories would be shut down. If the war against Japan should end soon after, the army of unemployed might swell to fifty million within a few weeks. Returning soldiers, looking for a job, would find breadlines on the street.

In fact, if Germany and Japan wished to make their most effective blow of the war against America, they could do nothing more catastrophic than to give up at once and together.

Isn't that a sorry state of affairs to contemplate? Isn't it a serious reflection on the common sense of the American people? Can't they do something about it?

Of course they can! Our country has been so intent on the immediate job of winning the war that it has neglected thus far to prepare for winning the peace. That's a natural and normal oversight. But it must not and can be corrected at once.

The first thing to do is to learn the name of your Congressman. Most Americans, to their shame, don't know it. The next step is to write or wire your Congressman—and your Senators as well—urging them to get busy on reconversion legislation—more specifically, the Kilgore Bill.

If this bill is enacted into law before Labor Day, as it should be, the Government, industry and labor can get started in time on the tremendous problem of readying our country for peace without panic.

War Effort Cannot Flag

Let it be emphasized that labor has no desire or intention of neglecting war work in favor of preparing peace jobs. The American Federation of Labor will stand for no slacking in war production. It is needed to give our fighting men, nor will it agree to the diversion of materials or manpower necessary for the successful prosecution of the war.

But it certainly can't hurt the war effort to make wise and timely preparations for peace. And if a certain amount of surplus materials and manpower can be used now or in the near future for reconversion, so much the better.

This obligation to prepare for peace is so overwhelming that it overshadows every other current domestic issue—including the election campaign. That is labor's sincere belief and we ask members of Congress to take notice.

These lawmakers of ours seem to have something else on their minds just now—something that seems so important to them that they are forgetting their jobs because of it. This prescot patien centers about what will happen in November. They are anxious to get re-elected.

Let us remind these Congressmen that one way to assure not getting re-elected is neglecting the job the American people pay them to do—the job of adopting legislation needed for the nation's welfare.

We don't believe our Congressmen would hurry overlong on the task of mending their political fences if they learned that you and the rest of their constituents want them to get busy on the Kilgore Bill. Write, wire or phone in a nice way, but do it. Remind them that there is a war on and a peace coming. Give them a polite buzz that Washington is calling and the Kilgore Bill is waiting to be passed. It won't take long to get action then.

"Labor," Rail Workers Publication, Repudiates CIO Political Actions

Washington, D. C.—The CIO's political pretensions were politely but effectively punctured in an editorial, entitled "Mr. Hillman's Fantastic Proposal," published in "Labor," weekly organ of the standard railway labor organizations. The text of the editorial follows:

Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, is chief director of the CIO's political activities. In order to comply with the provisions of the Smith-Connally Act, he proposes to operate through two committees, one made up of members of the CIO and the other of citizens who sympathize with the CIO's objectives.

Mr. Hillman says that each of these committees will have a campaign fund of $5,000,000. That's a total of $10,000,000. In addition, he proposes to "freeze" what is left of a fund of $700,000 raised to influence this year's primaries.

Never has any group in the labor movement attempted to raise such huge sums for political purposes. For example, the Standard Railroad Labor Organizations, which during the last 25 years have been more active in the political field than any other labor group, have never spent in any campaign as much as one-half of one per cent of the amount Mr. Hillman says he and his associates will throw into the 1944 campaign in order to re-elect Mr. Roosevelt and members of Congress approved by the CIO.

Parenthetically it might be pointed out that the CIO "tests" for candidates are not true union "yardsticks," and frequently emphasize issues of no direct concern to the working man.

As a consequence, candidates with good labor records are being vigorously defeated even though endorsed by the CIO, while candidates with comparatively poor labor records are ardently approved by the CIO.

However, that is a comparatively minor issue. What concerns us at the moment is Mr. Hillman's proposal to raise great "slush funds" to carry the coming election.

Coupled with Mr. Hillman's open alliance with the Communists in New York state and elsewhere, we have a situation which is full of ominous possibilities for the entire labor movement.

No fair-minded American can question the right of workers to organize for political purposes and to ardently support their friends and oppose their enemies.

However, if Mr. Hillman, or anyone else, imagines that a proposal to raise $6,000,000 to control a presidential campaign will not cause the most serious repercussions from one end of this country to the other, he simply does not know the American people.

Inevitably Mr. Hillman's program will strengthen the hands of organized labor's enemies and increase the demand for more rigid regulation of our unions.

If only the CIO were effected by such hostile popular reaction, we might shrug our shoulders and say, "It's none of our business." Unfortunately, while the great majority of CIO unionists have no liking or sympathy for Mr. Hillman's grandiose plan, the entire labor movement is likely to feel the sting of popular disapproval.

Mr. Hillman's alliance with the "Reds" is also a matter of moment to all trade unionists. For years AFL unions were plagued by Communist efforts to penetrate their ranks. These were successfully resisted, but only after long and bitter and costly struggles.

Now, with the approval of the CIO, Mr. Hillman has thrown the doors wide open to the "Reds." They dominate his political organization. They have put the propaganda the CIO circulates in political campaigns. If they will direct the expenditure of the millions Mr. Hillman proposes to raise for this campaign.

The CIO seriously questions if Mr. Hillmen's tactics will aid the Roosevelt-Truman ticket. It is much more likely to injure it. But whatever the effect may be on the presidential campaign, "Labor"-fears the consequences may be most serious for the entire labor movement. Therefore, it seems advisable to repudiate Mr. Hillman's unprecedented program at the very beginning.

Wounded AFL Soldiers Win Top Prize In Big War Bond Selling Contest

Washington, D. C.—A $500 war bond was awarded to Staff Sgt. Arthur White, Astoria, Long Island, member of AFL Building Service Employes Local 32-B, for selling more bonds than any other entrant in a sales contest for wounded soldiers at Walter Reed General Hospital, Washington, D. C. Second prize in the same contest, two $100 bonds, went to Cpl. Herbert Brasington, member of Carpenters Union, AFL, Charleston, S. C.

Twenty wounded veterans competed in the contest, which produced $400,000 in bond sales. They appeared on half-hour radio programs for five consecutive Sundays, appealing to listeners to telephone orders for war bonds in their behalf.

Sergeant White holds the Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster for twice carrying wounded men to cover under fire, the second time when he himself was badly wounded. He won the Distinguished Service Cross "for distinguishing itself in France, when it fought in Sicily, and he was injured by a sniper's bullet which entered his spinal column. Hospitalized for almost a year, he is now regaining partial use of his legs, paralyzed by the bullet.

Moving a machine gun into position under heavy fire in the Italian fighting won the Silver Star for Cpl. Brasington. He also holds the Purple Heart and one cluster and his battalion received a Presidential citation for superior valor under enemy fire at the battle of Casserine Pass. Shrapnel wounded Cpl. Brasington's left leg and twelve machine gun bullets entered his right arm. He has regained use of his leg, and, though he still cannot use the arm, doctors have hopes of eventual recovery.

Glass Bottle Blowers Convention Re-elects All Union's Officers

Cleveland.—President James Maloney has been unanimously re-elected at the 56th convention of the Glass Bottle Blowers Association of the United States and Canada held in the grand ballroom of the Cleveland hotel.

The delegates were welcomed by Mayor Frank R. Lausche and heard interesting talks on labor's participation in the war effort and the plans for post-war reconstruction by Matthew Woll, second Vice President of the AFL and by Frank Fenton, AFL Director of Organization.

Declarations reaffirming the loyalty of the organization to the American Federation of Labor were enthusiastically adopted. A feature of the convention was a banquet and entertainment attended by 500 delegates and their wives.

President Maloney praised the membership's strict adherence to labor's no-strike policy and their contributions to the war effort. He called the convention the most successful in the union's history.

New York Allows Transition Period Before Enforcing Equal Pay Law

New York City.—A transition period of about a year is being allowed by the State Department of Labor before the imposition of employers and employes affected by the new equal pay law that became operative July 1, Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi declared.

The statute, which was enacted by the last session of the Legislature, provides that employers may not discriminate in rates of pay for men and women doing the same specific job. Length of service and quality and quantity of work are the only factors permitted as bases for different rates of pay. Excluded from coverage under the law are the domestic servants; persons in domestic service in the home of the employer, farm laborers and persons employed by non-profit organizations, such as religious and charitable institutions.

Mr. Corsi said that for the present all enforcement activities would be concentrated on investigations of specific complaints from individuals or unions. Thus far, he noted, no complaints "of any size" had been received and no investigations started.

"When a complaint comes in," he explained, "we will institute a job analysis to determine whether or not there is just basis for the complaint." Under the law workers and employers are entitled to a hearing. If a violation is judged to exist, a civil action may be brought either by the Industrial Commissioner or by the individual worker. The Commissioner is also empowered to bring criminal proceedings.

Metal Trades Win Wage Adjustments For Gulf Coast Shipyard Workers

Miami Beach.—AFL Metal Trades Unions, representing workers in Gulf Coast shipyards, won a substantial victory in their battle for wage rate adjustments on ship repair jobs.

The gain was scored at a 10-day conference of labor, management and government representatives here under the auspices of the Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee.

An agreement was reached under which all overtime work on ship repair jobs did ships in Gulf yards will be paid for at double time rates. Heretofore this premium rate was allowed only where labor costs on a repair job were less than $112,000.

The $112,000 had also been the "ceiling" for payment of double time in cases of reconversion of newly-built ships. Under the agreement the new ceiling is now raised to $200,000, which will make it possible for more workers to earn considerably more at double rates for overtime.

Under another accord reached at the conference, workers who report on second or third shifts, but who are sent home before completion of the shifts will, nonetheless, be paid the regular wages for these late hours.

The unions also won a curb against any arbitrary changes in shifts by the government agencies—such as navy and Maritime Commission. Hereafter, when the agencies plan a shift change in any particular yard or city, they will first consult unions and management in other shipbuilding centers to obtain their "okay."

This plan, it was explained, will go far toward assuring a sufficient supply of shifts in the Gulf region.

Over 75 labor delegates attended the parley, which was presided over by Paul R. Porter, chairman of the Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee. President John P. Frey and Secretary-Treasurer J. E. McEntee of the AFL Metal Trades Department attended, and union spokesmen at the conference included Vice President Joseph P. McCollom of the Boilermakers; Hoyt Ross, international representative, Laborers' Union, and W. C. Kent, secretary-treasurer, Gulf Metal Trades Council.

Agencies Survey State Public Works As Rich Source of Post-War Jobs

Washington.—To line up post-war jobs, information is being sought on the types of public-works construction planned for after the war, in a country-wide survey, Secretary Ickes and Human M. Colmer of Mississippi, chairman of the House Post-War Planning Committee, revealed.

The survey is being conducted by the Federal Works Administrator, and has been addressed by Maj. Gen. Philip B. Fleming, Federal Works Administrator, to governors, county executives and mayors of cities of more than 10,000 inhabitants.

The survey," said General Fleming, "will cover four stages of plan preparation, ranging from projects for which bids could be advertised and contracts awarded within sixty days, to projects in the "idea" stage where construction is contemplated before 1950. Data will be assembled on nine types of projects to include only new construction, reconstruction and improvement involving public works facilities other than Federal. The governors, mayors and county executives have been asked to report what funds or reserves have been set aside for planning, what projects are under way or probable sources for financing them."

Types of projects embraced in the survey are as follows:

Highways, roads and streets; bridges, viaducts, grade separations, airport terminals and landing strips, airport buildings and other airport facilities; electric facilities; water and sanitation facilities; schools, including dormitories, auditoriums, gymnasiums buildings and administrative buildings; hospitals, including clinics, health centers, sanatoriums and convalescent buildings; city halls, court houses, police and fire stations, garages, penal institutions; recreational and community buildings; parks, including playgrounds, athletic fields, swimming pools, grandstands; golf courses, tennis courts, golf courses, swimming pools and shells, outdoor theaters and recreational buildings; and miscellaneous public facilities such as public toilets and comfort stations, local transportation facilities, docks, breakwaters, harbors, irrigations systems and other than Federal projects.

ILGWU LOCAL GIVES RED CROSS $600 CAR

Minneapolis, Minn.—Latest addition to the fleet of vehicles which make possible the immediate service rendered by the Hennepin County Red Cross Chapter is a service car, the gift of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. The car was purchased as a series of bond purchases presented by the following representatives of the Twin City Joint Board, ILGWU: Business Manager Miss Finkelstein, President Harry Wassegman, Vice President Clara Ballgren and Financial Secretary Dorothy Johnson.

AFL Drives For Kilgore Bill; Demands Congress Act Now

Wake Up Your Congressmen!

Washington, D. C.—In an urgent message to all organizations affiliated with the AFL, President William Green stressed the need for favorable action by Congress on the Kilgore Bill in the next few weeks to save the nation's workers from "widespread confusion and misery." Mr. Green asked all AFL members to contact their Representatives and Senators immediately, urging them to support this measure. His message follows:

Our remarkable progress in producing the quantities of materials needed for the European campaign as well as the military gains on that front, make it urgent that Congress enact legislation authorizing the machinery for reconversion. It takes time to get things in readiness for that big job which will affect so much of our productive facilities, our work forces and our whole national fabric.

Congress has passed legislation setting up administrative machinery to facilitate contract cancellations. That is essential to give industry capital to reconvert.

Congress has enacted legislation to provide for those in the armed services when reconversion comes.

But Congress has not acted to take care of workers during the dislocations following contract cancellations.

Congress has not acted to set up orderly and efficient methods for the disposal of stock-piles, surplus commodities, government machinery and plants so that industries can move rapidly into civilian production at a high level, thus providing employment for those who must earn their living.

Congress must also provide adequately for workers in the change-over which may require from little time to 18 or 24 months. Workers must not be dragged into degradation and dependency but should have emergency unemployment benefits so that their purchasing power will be conserving industries. Wage earner buying power is as essential to industries as to the workers. An adequate benefit, at least 80 per cent of full-time earnings, is the responsibility of the government.

The American Federation of Labor has endorsed the Kilgore Bill (S. 1893) House companion bill H. R. 6126) to accomplish this purpose. This bill also provides that representatives of employers, workers and families shall have a responsible part in making the policies to guide reconversion into full employment.

The American Federation of Labor has urged the Senate Military Affairs Committee to report and vote early and promptly. We need the help of every labor organization to get prompt action. You can give indispensable aid by immediately contacting your Senators and Representatives in the House requesting them to act favorably and promptly on this bill so that our country can escape economic chaos.

Action by Congress within the next few weeks will save us widespread confusion and misery.

The Federation depends upon you for prompt, effective action. Please report promptly to this office on results.

Teamster-Soldier, Leg Shot Off, Pluckily Plans Return To Job

Washington, D. C.—It takes courage to face enemy fire. It takes even greater courage to face life with the loss of a limb and be maimed in battle. That is the kind of courage shown by a union teamster, Private Lewis Fleeger, twenty-five, now recuperating in Walter Reed Hospital here, after losing his left leg when a German shell in Italy blew it off.

Young Fleeger, who served for twenty-one months with the Medical Corps in Africa, Sicily and Italy, doesn't want sympathy. He said in an interview:

"I'm lucky. I've still got my knee. As soon as I get a stick on it, I can go back to my old job driving a 10-ton truck. A lot of guys won't be able to take up where they left off. They deserve the sympathy."

Decorated with the order of the Purple Heart, Fleeger gave high praise to the performance of American airmen and the men who drive them, many of them also members of the Teamsters Union.

"When you see trucks driven over sand dunes, bomb holes, swamps and bushes, you can hardly believe your eyes," he said. "You think the drivers must be crazy to take such chances even in emergencies, but they have learned that driving trucks can be fun, thanks to the fine workmanship of the men and women working in the factories here at home. I wouldn't be here myself if it weren't for the trucks that delivered the instruments that doctors used on me when I was hit."

Fleeger comes from Newcastle, Pa., and is a member of Teamsters Local No. 848 there.

AFL And WPB Launch Safety Campaign To Cut Accidents In War Industries

Washington, D. C.—President William Green called upon all AFL affiliates to join with the War Production Board in a national drive to reduce industrial accidents and occupational diseases in war industries.

"Accidents and occupational diseases have become a major war problem," Mr. Green declared in a circular letter. "The seriousness of the losses to war production, in addition to that to the injured workers themselves and their families caused by the loss of more than 2,400,000 industrial injuries in 1943 cannot be ignored."

While the primary responsibility for organization of adequate health and safety programs is the primary responsibility of management, Mr. Green declared that unions have a serious responsibility to cooperate in every way to make such programs effective. He added:

"Thought, time and money spent on health and safety programs have proved to be profitable to both management and labor. The earnest cooperation of labor and management is necessary to make such programs effective. Health and safety is a non-controversial subject that has a tremendous impact upon war production and presents a fertile field for the establishment of labor-management cooperation.

"Therefore, at the request of the War Production Board, the American Federation of Labor, in cooperation with other labor and employer organizations, is urging its membership to participate in the immediate establishment of joint plant health and safety committees in all plants having a sufficient number of employes to make such a committee feasible.

"We urge the establishment of a health and safety program under capable direction in every plant regardless of size. The joint interest of the employe and the employer must be recognized and fully utilized. In plants where a labor-management production committee has already been established and proven effective, the health and safety committee might function as a subcommittee of the labor-management production committee. Wherever possible, the activities of the health and safety committee should be integrated with grievance procedure, and yet the committee must have direct contact with top management and responsible representatives of the employer."

Green Warns of Chaos Unless Plans Are Ready To Cope With Sudden Peace

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor spearheaded a vigorous drive to jolt Congress into immediate action on reconversion legislation so that the nation may be ready to undertake peace production should the war in Europe end suddenly.

Concerned by reports that Congress intended to mark time until after election so that members facing re-election contests might spend all their time campaigning, President William Green served notice that labor will not abide such dangerous procrastination.

Through the AFL's legislative representatives, he prevailed upon Senator Robert R. Reynolds, chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, to call an immediate meeting of that committee to consider the Kilgore Bill and other pending legislation dealing with post-war readjustment.

When it appeared that a committee quorum would not respond to this appeal, Senate Majority Leader Alben W. Barkley telegraphed Senator Reynolds in sending another imperative telegram setting a meeting for Aug. 3.

Meanwhile, Mr. Green called upon all AFL affiliates and members to urge their Senators and Representatives to support the Kilgore Bill. In a public statement he said that the Federation endorses the Kilgore Bill because it seeks to protect human rights as well as property rights during the post-war emergency.

Fears have been expressed that should Germany suddenly collapse and surrender, as some military strategists predict, more than ten million workers would find themselves unemployed overnight.

"Immediate passage of the Kilgore bill is vital to help provide jobs and income for the demobilized servicemen and demployed war workers," Mr. Green said.

"We call upon the members of Congress to act quickly on this important legislation because time is running out. If the war against Germany should end suddenly, before we have made adequate and orderly provision for that contingency, the home front would be plunged into chaos.

"Right now we are wholly unprepared for peace. We have no plans for meeting the 40 unemployment, with shutdown of war factories or with the problems of reconversion. If peace catches us thus unprepared, economic panic jeopardizing any possibility of future security and reconstruction may ensue.

"Therefore, I urge Congress to remain in session until final action can be taken upon this basic legislation."

Senator Barkley, striking a similar note of warning, said in his telegram:

"It is imperative that members of the Senate Military Affairs Committee return to Washington at once in order that proper consideration may be given to vital and indispensable legislation dealing with reconversion, demobilization, and surplus property disposition, bills concerning which are now pending in Military Affairs Committee."

This committee is now considered the bottleneck on post-war legislation, with an undercurrent of hostility prevailing between sponsors of rival measures. Besides the Kilgore bill, there is pending a bill sponsored by Senators George and Murray which is not regarded as favorably as the Kilgore bill by labor.

Senator Kilgore joined with Representative Celler, sponsor of the same bill in the House, in urging immediate action. They declared that to gain full employment in peace time "we must find 15 million more jobs than were available in 1929."

"If we plan only for pre-war levels of production, we shall fail," their statement added. "We must produce at least 60 to 70 percent more than in 1929. If we do not plan for full employment, any other plans we make will be swept away in the tide of unemployment and depression."

H. R. Nicholas, Assistant President Of Boilermakers, Dies Suddenly

Kansas City, Kan.—Henry Ransom Nicholas, assistant president of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, died here suddenly at the age of 52, after a career of nearly 30 years of devoted service to the cause of organized labor.

Born in this city, within a stone's throw of the Boilermakers' present headquarters, Nicholas came up the hard way. He began his trade experience as an office boy and quit only when he settled in his chosen field, the boilermakers' trade. He served years after as head of Local No. 83 here, he became its financial secretary and business representative.

Thereafter, he rose steadily. In 1920 he was elected president of District No. 50 of the Boilermakers, which held jurisdiction over refinery and petroleum tank work in the Southwestern states.

In recognition of his marked ability, the delegates to the 1930 Boilermakers' convention elected him as a vice president. He also assumed peace, he served at headquarters as a "right-hand man" to former President Frank J. Hoffman, a position he likewise occupied at this year's convention. At this year's convention, Nicholas' promotion was unanimously elevated to assistant president.

In addition to his service to the Brotherhood, Nicholas took a prominent role in the labor movement, serving repeatedly as a delegate to the Kansas City Central Trades Council, the State Federation of Labor and to conventions of the AFL Metal Trades and Building Trades Departments.

NOTICE TO LABOR PRESS!

Washington, D. C.—This year —Sept. 4 to be exact— marks the fiftieth anniversary of the celebration of Labor Day as a legal national holiday.

Beginning with its next issue Aug. 8, the AFL Weekly News Service will carry material for Labor Day editions.

This material will contain messages from leaders of the AFL and from high government and political figures; news and feature stories appropriate to Labor Day and mats to be distributed free of charge to the labor press.